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AUTHOR Sawyer, Doug
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ABSTRACT

A two-semester course in English composition offered in a Japanese university is described. The course is designed to transition students from minimal skills in communicative writing at program entry to a course in field-specific technical writing by exposing students to several writing genres. Key activities of the course include pre- and post-course essays, journal writing, weekly rewriting assignments, and end-of-semester portfolios. Students' perceptions of the course and its activities have been very positive. Possible concerns, responses, and future adaptations in the course are discussed, including the validity of pre- and post-course measures, classroom time organization, course scheduling and relationship to other courses, and issues of classroom technique. Contains 14 references. (MSE)

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From Non-communicative Exercises to Technical Writing: Profile of a Two-Semester Preparatory Sequence

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Doug Sawyer
Center for Language Research
University of Aizu, Japan

Abstract

Activities and procedures used for helping students to transition from scant and non-communicative writing to successful communication across several writing genres (in preparation for the next step of field-specific technical writing) are described. Suggested activities include directed journaling, student self-correction based on teacher feedback, repeated re-writes leading to portfolios, and context-embedded grammar practice activities. Student examples and feedback are shared, followed by a discussion of concerns and possible future adaptation.

Introduction

Upon entering universities in Japan, many students can not communicate ideas in writing. For example, under 40% of students entering our classes at the University of Aizu demonstrated (on a pre-test) even minimal ability to write paragraphs, yet a program goal is to prepare them for a technical writing course upon completion of two semesters (or a total of around thirty 90-minute classes) of general composition classes.

In this paper, I will attempt to sketch as clear a picture as possible of the activities and methods used in my Composition 1 and Composition 2 classes at the University of Aizu, a Japanese prefectural computer science and computer engineering university that also maintains significant requirements for English language skills.

Activities designed to enable students to accomplish the transition described (in the first paragraph) above include the following: weekly free-writing journals, weekly hard-copy re-writes, use of a numerically-coded list of suggestions for improvement, in-class context-embedded exercises, in-class small-group review and critique, in-class review of new list additions and and in-class review of points related to repeated student writing errors.

Grades in the mixed-level classes are based largely on ongoing completion of tasks. Tests are graded primarily to guarantee student motivation in order to to maintain the role of testing as an accurate gauge of student performance and improvement for teacher and student reference.

Finally, students are asked to complete anonymous questionnaires in which they report their general performance and improvement and their estimation of the value of some of the tasks used in class.

Background – the Setting at the University of Aizu

The University of Aizu is located in Aizuwakamatsu City, Fukushima Prefecture (in rural Tohoku, Japan). There are currently only two majors in the undergraduate division of the university, computer software and computer hardware. The school was founded 4 1/2 years ago with a vision to bring international computer expertise and access to the people

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and industries of the Aizu area, Fukushima Prefecture, and Japan. Roughly 50% of the faculty are non-Japanese, and classes are taught in either English or Japanese (as faculty members are required to be fluent in at least ONE of those 2 languages). In addition, a written graduation thesis in English is required of all seniors prior to graduation.

All students are required to take a core language cluster of 10 English classes. They can also choose English electives and/or English SCCP's (Student Co-operative Class Projects) if they so desire. The English core consists of the following courses: 1 term of Pronunciation (1st semester), 3 terms of Listening/Conversation (1st, 2nd, and 4th semesters), 2 terms of Reading (2nd and 3rd semesters), 2 terms of Composition (1st and 2nd semesters), and 2 terms of Technical Writing (3rd and 8th semesters). Each class meets 90 minutes per week for approximately 15 weeks per term.

Key Activities and Rationale

The key activities of my course (and their weights in calculating the grade) include pre- and post-tests (the post-test is 15% of semester grade), weekly writing journals (20%), repeated weekly re-write assignments (20%), and a final portfolio of a student's best essays (30%). The remaining 15% of the grade is based on a final grammar exam required by our composition teaching group as a whole.

- *Pre- and Post-test Essays*

Students are required to write an essay the first day of class on a general topic about which they all have knowledge (i.e. "My High School Days"); this is not graded, but it often becomes the basis of their first "re-write essay", described below. Likewise, one of the (graded) final exams for each course is an in-class essay in which students can choose from 3 general topics relating to genres we have covered in class. The final exams serve as post-tests for each class (and the post-test for Composition 1 serves as the pre-test for Composition 2). Unlike most of the activities described below, the above information is true for all of the composition classes taught at this university, not only for the classes discussed in this paper. When returning post tests to students, I attach a copy of the (ungraded) pre-test along with each student's corrected and graded post-test. In this way, a student can see how different his/her (first-draft) writing looks at the end of the semester.

- *Writing journals*

Students are required to buy a notebook (B5 size or larger) in which they will write weekly journal assignments. Twenty percent of each student's grade is based on completion of these weekly writing journals – 2 B5 pages (or one page front and back) double-spaced checked every week in class. The grade is based solely on the length of writing (2 complete pages or more = 20 points, 1 1/2 pages = 15 points, etc.); grammar, spelling, and other correction criteria were not considered at all in determining scores for writing journal assignments.

Journals are handed in every week at the beginning of class, checked quickly for length (and appropriateness of task, if any guidelines were assigned) while students are engaged in assigned activities, and returned to students before the end of class. Checking needs to be done quickly, and scores are simply marked onto a class list – to be transferred to a spread-sheet later.

Optional general topics are assigned at first, with the option of writing about anything else instead. However, as the first semester progresses (and throughout most of the second semester), general writing styles/genres (i.e. opinion essay, giving instructions, etc.) are required. If a student's journal entry using the required style does not fill 2 pages, the remainder can be filled with anything the student chooses to write about.

The purpose for requiring writing journals and grading them on length alone (and perhaps genre but NOT grammatical or organizational accuracy) is to train students to focus on expressing their ideas naturally on paper. Most of their past experience (before entering university) was based on word-by-word translation and/or sentence-level non-communicative exercises, with a focus on grammar apart from meaning. Writing journals are used to actively require and challenge students to focus on writing complete thoughts, ideas, and concepts; this is in contrast to a previous strategy (among many students) of focusing only upon word-level and sentence-level accuracy without concern for communicating concepts. The length (2 B5 pages double-spaced) was chosen because it is considered by the instructor to be a challenging but attainable goal for most students.

Although some instructors no doubt prefer more infrequent monitoring of writing journals, there are many benefits to weekly in-class grading. It better encourages the ongoing writing practice necessary for long-term retention (rather than a sudden spurt of writing activity prior to a single deadline), gives negligent students immediate incentive to improve their effort the next week, encourages class attendance, cuts down on the instructor's out-of class grading time, and provides material for students to use in future (re-write) essays. It is my personal preference to enter the data on a student list and transfer it to a spread-sheet later because of the time and effort needed for either re-organizing all the journals into spread-sheet order or scrolling the spread-sheet repeatedly each time the next journal is out of sequence. Since the class list is in the same order as my spread-sheet, transfer is simple and quick.

I have chosen to assign general topical categories and/or writing genres of journal entries for several reasons. First, some students have significant difficulty thinking of their own topics. Second, having potential topics and genres in mind aids in the development of examples, exercises, and/or introductory activities for each week's assignment.

A third important reason for assigning general categories and/or genres for journal entries is that a potential drawback of the re-write and portfolio approach that I have adopted/adapted is that it can tend to result in students applying only the written genres they are currently accustomed to, such as narratives of experience or simple sensory descriptions, and repeatedly using such low-level writing styles for all their essays (Jarrel, 1997). Frequently setting weekly guidelines upon genre in writing journals helps push students to develop their writing beyond the styles they are most comfortable with – especially since my students will probably need to make use of specialized genres in their technical writing and content classes, graduation theses, and future careers. Of course, these weekly guidelines need to be communicated clearly in a form that is easily retrievable for verification; e-mail is well-suited to such communication, and my students are well-acquainted with e-mail from frequent use at the university.

Finally, controlling writing journal genre and guidelines allows the teacher to gradually challenge more advanced students to deeper evaluation and explanation when responding to written texts assigned for students' response; this can help to overcome a tendency for

students to simply react to a text (with or without understanding) rather than understanding, evaluating and critically responding to texts. Such understanding, evaluation and critical response is usually expected in content classes but is often missing from EAP (English for Academic Purposes – for non-native speakers) courses (Leki & Carson, 1997).

- *Weekly Rewrite Assignments*

Another 20 percent of students' grades are base on their rewrite assignments. I accept a maximum of 1 essay per week, handed in to me by Saturday morning, and I return them to my classes the following Thursday in class. These are essays that are written and rewritten (using word-processor software or e-mail) until they are considered complete (coherent, clear, well-organized and grammatically correct) by the instructor. There is a progression of focus – particularly early in the first semester, when long-term practices are being broken and targeted areas of writing skill are being practiced for the first time.

It has consistently been my experience that Japanese students (perhaps to a larger degree than students of other socio-cultural backgrounds) tend to under-explain their ideas, placing the responsibility upon the reader to guess their intended meaning and/or to share highly comparable personal background understanding. Furthermore, computer science, which is the presumed career of many of my students, may require a unique level of ability to prepare articles and presentations for us ignorant readers from other disciplines who read and refer to computer science research (Anthony, 1997). Therefore, focus on complete explanation, elaboration, and support of ideas is of particular importance from the start. Organizational factors, such as length, paragraph division, introductions, conclusions, and titles are also marked before moving on to other things.

Another early (and often ongoing) focus is to help a student recognize any strange information that seems totally unrelated to the main topic of his/her essay and/or to the paragraph in which it appears; the student can then consider whether to perhaps remove the information or to expand it so that the connection with the other ideas of the essay becomes clearer; I have found this to be another persistent tendency of Japanese students, which is probably based largely on differences in rhetorical style and minimal training even in Japanese writing. However, it has proven to diminish consistently with time, reminders, and practice – in first drafts, not only in re-writes.

As the semester continues, students work on practices exercises and receive feedback related to other problem areas as well, such as spacing before and after punctuation, capitalization, ungrammatical sentence patterns, and use of spell-checking software to help with some obvious mistakes. As students are taught and required to apply each of the above skills, they lose points when they don't apply them. They also lose points any time they make no effort to apply the instructor's suggestions and corrections; if suggestions and corrections are followed unsuccessfully or applied differently than intended, no points are lost.

I use a numerically coded system of abbreviations that students can refer to on a web-page. Numerical coding is my preference because I can easily update, remove, or expand my list of codes according to the errors of my students, and I'm less tempted to write out the correct answer for them. I re-organize my codes every semester, and they are hopefully becoming clearer and more complete. Examples of current suggestion codes for student reference and instructor reference, which are constantly being adapted and updated, are

included as appendices at the end of this paper.

Another benefit of numerical coding is that I tend to quickly memorize the short codes, since I use them repeatedly for many papers, but students don't memorize them as quickly (since no one student uses them anywhere near as much as I do). The result is that I can write a simple two- or three-digit code from memory when I come across a repeated problem. I can also compress the several (currently 3 or more so far this semester) pages of text that the student sheet takes up into a one-page abbreviated form for myself. When students look at the circled portions of text and accompanying numerical codes, they can look at the explanation of the kind of mistakes they made and try to correct them, or they can choose to try to catch and correct their own mistakes before looking at the form to check whether they have correctly diagnosed them.

Using coded suggestions also allows students to receive feedback directly from me on what they need to improve, yet other students can actually help them make those improvements during group work time in class. In group work times, each person gets support one at a time from a small group concentrating on improving his/her paper based on my suggestions and/or group members ideas. In this way, students' preference for direct input from the teacher (Zhang, 1995) is honored, but they also learn to rely on and help each other.

The entire (current) texts of the student version and my short personal reference version of the web-page correction guide (without HTML links or font characteristics clearly indicated) are included as appendices. You can (presently) access all of my (updated) composition/writing course links (except the teacher's version of the correction guide) through a link from my home page, which is located at the following URL.

http://www.u-aizu.ac.jp/~doug/welcome.html

- *Final Portfolios*

At the end of the semester, portfolios of students' best essays are turned in. Once re-writes have been labeled, "Ready for Portfolio", according to one of the numerical codes, they can get complete credit as ONE of the essays in the final portfolio. The final portfolio is worth 30 percent of the semester grade, and it is based on the number of completed essays (or the total length). Placing a significantly larger weight on portfolios of students' best work than on a holistically-graded exam is consistent with research findings about the accuracy of the two methods of grading ESL/EFL students' actual writing ability (Ruetten, 1994), since they consistently spend more time writing and/or revising papers for content courses than do native speakers.

For Composition 1, a full-credit final portfolio (collected after approximately 13 weeks of classes) consists EITHER of 3 completed essays OR of 1 or 2 completed totaling 450 words or more. This assumes an average essay length of around 150 words but allows for shorter essays; it also allows credit to those whose have spent a lot of time on long involved essays rather than 3 short essays.

For Composition 2, a full-credit final portfolio (collected after approximately 12 weeks of classes) consists EITHER of 4 completed essays OR of 2 or 3 completed essays with a total of 800 words or more. This assumes an average essay length of around 200 words or

more but again allows for shorter essays and gives greater credit to longer more detailed essays.

An added limitation has been added this semester that a maximum of 1 narrative essay (or a maximum of 400 words) will be accepted for credit. This is meant to discourage the use of simpler genres by students who might tend to to avoid more challenging genres that serve as building blocks for their future writing development, In the future, the maximum credit of words for narrative essays will probably be reduced to 200 rather than 400, but the guideline was introduced during the semester when some students had already written fairly long narratives.

Students lose points for every incomplete (not yet labeled, " 100 – Ready for Portfolio") essay in their final portfolios, and they lose additional points for significant errors and/or problems in their not-ready-for-portfolio essays.

Students' Reported Evaluation and Comments

At the end of the course, students are given a questionnaire consisting of 21 questions assessing (on a Likert-type scale) their perceived improvement in ability and motivation and the perceived benefits of special activities used in the classes. The 21st question is an open-ended request for further comments or suggestions. A copy of the questionnaire is printed as an appendix to this paper.

Students' impressions of the benefits of the Composition 1 class this year were consistently positive (Composition 2 is still in progress), with very few exceptions on most of the items. This is significant in that a relatively large amount of work was required of students, and this is contrary to the normal stereotype of the Japanese university system and the stereotype of the apathetic and easily discouraged Japanese student of English. A general report of students' responses about the benefits of activities is given below.

Writing Journals – 78% of students reported that writing journal assignments had a positive result for them (34% said they received a "large good result", and 44 percent reported a "small good result"). 10% reported "no change," and 3% said they had been " bad for [their] motivation/skills."

Rewrites of Compositions – 87% said re-write assignments had a positive result (48% large good result, 39% small good result). 6% reported no change, and 1 student said they had affected him/her negatively.

Final Portfolio – 71% described the experience of turning in a portfolio for evaluation as positively affecting their skills and/or motivation (34% large good result, 37% small good result). 15% reported no change, and 10% reported a negative influence.

I view these results very positively. The higher degree of positive response to re-writes (and accompanying teacher feedback) as compared with writing journals is consistent with expectations that students would value activities involving teacher feedback more highly than those not involving such feedback (Saito, 1994). I was surprised by the positive response to portfolios, which were used primarily for evaluation and grading, and which were not ongoing activities providing practice for students. It would have perhaps been useful to include similar questions about students impressions of the benefits of department-wide evaluation instruments: an in-class timed writing exam and a multiple choice discrete-point

grammar exam. However, the purpose was to measure student response to activities and methods that could have been new and challenging or perhaps difficult and discouraging for them.

Possible Concerns, Responses, and Future Adaptations

- Validity of Pre- and Post-tests

Using the pre-test (at least in the first term) as a comparison with the post test at the end of the term is probably not a fully accurate measure of student improvement, since the setting and atmosphere of the tests are different. For example, the pre-test is not graded, whereas the post-test is graded. In addition, students are dealing with a new format and new software on the pre-test, whereas they are already familiar with such procedures and software when they take the post-test. Finally, the genres offered to students for the pre-tests (in both courses) are not necessarily comparable to the genres offered in the post-tests. As a result, perhaps the difference between performance on the 2 tests is somewhat inflated during the first term; however, the test of the second term is probably a more accurate gauge of improvement from the end of the first term until the end of the second term.

- Time Considerations

One of the main concerns for any composition teacher is likely to be the self-inflicted pressure to spend a potentially unlimited amount of out-of-class time every week reading and responding to students' compositions. Our classes have a maximum of 32 students per class. So far, I have not had more than 3 composition classes in one semester, although I also teach listening/speaking classes, so I have always had less than 100 re-write essays to correct per week. However, the numbers have still often been overwhelming. Instructors always need creative ways to limit processing time for student essays.

One method I tried for limiting time was setting a timer for 5 minutes each time I began a new essay and trying to stop when the timer went off; however, this didn't work very well for me, although it may for others, because I was frequently interrupted and would then have to start my timer again and/or have my alarm going off in the middle of important discussions for no apparent reason. In addition, some of my more proficient and/or long-winded students write long and involved essays, and it may take me almost 5 minutes to read through and process one of their essays once (which I TRY to do BEFORE beginning to mark the paper); it would be unfair not to offer any suggestions or help simply because time had expired, especially since their errors and difficulties often needed more elaborate explanations and/or the addition of a new numerical category.

This semester I have added a numerical code (71) that means, "I have already marked at least 10-15 suggestions, and I need to go on to the next essay." In addition, students who receive several #51 marks – indicating they aren't trying to apply my suggestions – lose points for wasting my time; once I find 3 or 4 such problems on the same draft, I stop grading their papers. Finally, if people aren't yet applying some of the previously covered principles (introduction, conclusion, using paragraphs, spaces after punctuation, etc.), I also stop without making other suggestions.

Establishing general sets of useful activities that students know how to do also helps cut down on preparation time. As a bank of practice activities is developed and/or accumu-

lated by a teacher, class preparation can occupy a smaller amount of time. It is my attitude that the benefit my students receive from my individual feedback takes precedence over other preparation.

- Program and Schedule Considerations

Program design also affects quantity and style of activities. For example, weekly 90-minute lessons are probably not ideal, but at the same time the focus on the classroom for a contact point between out-of-class activities can also help develop learner autonomy, and adaptations can be and are made.

In addition, the schedule of Composition 1 first semester – prior to Reading 1 and without any other previous university-level English course shared by all our students – was perhaps misguided. However, a newly proposed curriculum is expected to be implemented beginning in April 1998 that should greatly improve the situation.

Another difficulty (or benefit, depending on perspective) is the practice of grouping students into classes according to academic major and alphabetical order rather than according to ability. This provides a challenge, but one of the strengths of this approach is that it allows flexibility for each student to begin where s/he is and improve based on ongoing feedback (from the instructor and peers) and immediate personal application of what is being learned – regardless of entrance level or past opportunity. It provides the added benefit of avoiding the effective, although inadvertent, tendency of permanently tracking lower students into low-level classes; the level of material covered in lower-level classes virtually always finishes at a lower level than the concurrent higher-level classes, thus consistently shutting lower-level students out from subsequent semesters of higher-level classes.

- Other Considerations

As alluded to earlier, a possible drawback to a free-writing, re-write, and portfolio approach is that students who choose their own genres may tend to gravitate toward the simplest genres and writing styles, thus never progressing to more complicated genres and compositions that would better prepare them for the writing expected in content courses and/or their future jobs. However, these concerns are not restricted to such types of ESL classes; rather they are an inherent danger in any environment where students are not consistently challenged and required to move beyond their current skills and comfort zones. EAP classes have to either streamline training (if and when realistically possible) or else slow down the process of student entrance into content classes. This instructor considers it an ongoing necessity to continually adapt materials and practices as new insights become available – through experience, reading, research, and feedback (from students and others).

Finally, there is a natural tendency among most of us to conduct feedback primarily along the lines of grammar and mechanical correction rather than teacher-student dialogue with a focus toward helping students to express meaning (Susser, 1994). Using a numerical system, or any other time-saving repetitive standard form for marking, can easily facilitate inadvertent shifting back into a mode of simply circling " mistakes" for correction. However, writing out suggestions and clarifying questions can greatly increase time expenditure, which tends to result in the same effect over time. In the end, the issue of time

tends to push most of us toward less interactive methods. The effort to focus on working with students to help them improve in their ability to communicate meaning requires an ongoing effort; this effort should be present in our methodological decisions and our pursuit of more productive solutions.

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Appendix A

Suggestion Codes for Students

The following numbers will be used to show you what kinds of errors you make in your essays. When something is marked, you may want to try to guess what kind of error you made and fix it before reading my explanations below; then you can use the explanations to check whether you guessed correctly. This may help you improve in your ability to find and correct your own errors in the future.

AN IMPORTANT POINT TO REMEMBER

The most important idea in writing is to communicate your message clearly in English. You are writing in English, so you can assume that the main readers (audience) are NOT Japanese -- since you would probably write to Japanese people in the Japanese language. For this reason, try to use an appropriate communication style, and communicate as accurately and clearly as possible.

Select a shorter version to print out and check your mistakes.

1. **Title**: You will lose points if you have no title.
> A. The title should be interesting, clear and concise.
> B. The title should be closely related to the main idea of your essay.
> C. The title is usually NOT a full sentence.
> D. For composition essays, capitalize the first and last words of the title. Also capitalize all important words. *There are DIFFERENT rules for journal article titles.*

2. **Introduction**: You need a short introductory paragraph at the beginning of your essay. You will lose points if you don't have an introduction. **For more information about writing an introduction, click HERE.**
> A. The introduction should **sound interesting**, so the reader will want to read your essay. Avoid phrases like, "I'm going to write about...."
> B. The introduction should **introduce** the main topic of your essay, so the reader understands what you are going to write about. For more information, click here.

3. **Conclusion**: You need a short concluding paragraph at the end of your essay. You will lose points if you have no conclusion. **For more information about writing a conclusion, click HERE.**
> A. The conclusion should quickly **review the ideas** that you wrote about in your essay and/or make some kind of **important final statement** about the main topic of the essay.
> B. The conclusion should leave an impression in the reader's mind. This is the **last thing** s/he is going to read, and you want him/her to **remember** it.

4. **Paragraphs**: Your essay should be separated into paragraphs (or you will lose many points).
> A. **Skip lines between paragraphs (or you will lose points).**
> B. Each paragraph should have **one main idea**.
> C. There are usually a few sentences supporting, explaining and/or clarifying the main idea of the paragraph.
> D. If this message is written, please **begin a new paragraph** at this point.
> E. **Continue your paragraph on the same line.** Don't begin a new line except when you have reached the end of the previous line or when you are starting a new paragraph.
> F. This sentence is NOT related to the rest of the paragraph. Delete it, or use it in a different paragraph.
> G. Add more details. This paragraph is incomplete.
> H. The order of your sentences within this paragraph is strange. Please improve the order of the

Appendix B

Instructor's Reference Suggestion Guide

1. Title: lose points if you have no title.> A. interesting and short. > B. closely related to the main idea > C. NOT a full sentence. > D. capitalize first, last and important words.
2. Introduction: You will lose points if you don't have an introduction.> A. **sound interesting. Avoid** phrases like, "I'm going to write about...." > B. **introduce** the main topic
3. Conclusion: lose points if no conclusion.
> A. **review the ideas, important final statement.** > B. **final impression**
4. Paragraphs : separated into paragraphs. (-many pts.) > A. **Skip lines (- pts.)** > B. **one main idea.** > C. sentences supporting > D. **new paragraph** > E. **the same line.** > F. sentence NOT related to paragraph. > G. more details--incomplete. > H. strange sentence order > I. paragraph NOT related to introduction/essay > J. Need transition and/or another paragraph
5. Unclear meaning/ strange wording: > A. Wrong word order > B.not necessary -> delete. > C. not real English > D. add word/phrase. > E. not clear for most native speakers ->explain> F. wrong word/phrase > G. need more information: details. Support/illustrate more completely. > H. I don't understand --> see me. > J. Unnecessary/Unrelated details --> Delete? > K. Too informal?
6. Spacing mistake: (lose points) > A. added spaces in wrong place. > B. need space
7. Don't begin a sentence with this word.
8. Spelling : > A. confused "r" and "l". > B. same sound > C. similar but different words. > D. katakana English > E. didn't use spell-checker [lose points].
9. Capitalization: > A. need capital. > B. remove capital. > C. First word of sentence (- pts.)
10. General Punctuation : > A. wrong punctuation. > B. should be NO punctuation. > C. Need punctuation. > D. wrong order. > E. Diff. levels --> diff. punct. --> see me?
11. Wrong verb tense > A. not an English vb. form
12. Subject , Verb , etc. mismatch: > A. Noun-Verb mismatch > B. Subject-Object mistake > C. Other singular-plural mismatch
13. Pronoun > A. no noun nearby > B. 2 or more nearby nouns > C. need pronoun (or another noun) > D. wrong pronoun> E. add a pronoun/noun. > F. Do NOT repeat noun/pron. (~wa/~ga?) > G. Avoid gender pronouns and adjectives. > H. s/he, etc. (pron.) > J. his/her (adj.
14. Wrong grammatical form:> A. noun/pronoun > B. verb > C. adjective > D. adverb > E. preposition > F. not a complete sentence. > G. sentence too long, etc. -->break it up. > H.combine sentences.
15. Use parallel grammar forms (parallelism).
16. Wrong word form or ending: > A. singular/plural > B. can NOT be plural > C. "each" and "every" > D. ~ing vs. ~ed
17. Article: > A. wrong article > B.need article> C. NOT need --> delete
18. Font/marking: > *A. Italics* > B. Indent Text > C. Underline or *Italicize Book Titles* > D. *"Article Titles"* - *Italics* or "Quotes"
19. Transition words/phrases > A. Vary sequence words. > B. Vary transitions w/ similar meaning.
20. Special Punctuation: > A. Hyphen > B. Parentheses > C. Comma(s) > D. Dash(es) > E. Quotation Marks > F. Colon > G. Semicolon > H. Apostrophe (ownership/missing letters)
40. Plagiarism: > A. short --> give credit (or lose points)> B. Long/entire --> NO! (zero credit)
41. from a previous semester/ different class? --> no credit.
51. I previously made suggestion (lose points)
61. Give me ALL PREVIOUS DRAFTS .
71. marked more than 10 items already
81. Only 1 narrative (maximum 1 essay/400 wds. credit)
91. Come to see me --> Need to talk to clarify.
100. Ready for portfolio and web page.

Appendix C

Student Questionnaire

Final Questionnaire - English Composition I July 1997

Please circle the correct major: Computer Hardware / Computer Software

Part I: Circle the answer you feel best describes your thinking about each topic.

1. Have you improved in your ability to write your thoughts and ideas quickly?
A. My skills are worse now than before. B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

2. Have you increased in your desire/willingness to write your thoughts and ideas?
A. My desire has decreased. B. No change
C. Small increase D. Large increase
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

3. What has been the result of writing journal assignments for you?
A. They have been bad for my English motivation/skills. B. No change
C. Small good result D. Large good result
E. I don't know F. I don't understand.

4. How many writing journal assignments did you complete?
A. None B. Less than half
B. More than half C. (almost) All of them
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

5. Have you improved in your ability express your thoughts and ideas in an essay?
A. My skills are worse now than before B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know F. I don't understand.

6. Have you improved in your desire/willingness to express your thoughts and ideas in an essay?
A. My desire has decreased. B. No change
C. Small increase D. Large increase
E. I don't know F. I don't understand.

7. Have you improved in your ability to find and correct mistakes in your essays?
A. My skills are worse now than before B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know F. I don't understand.

8. Have you improved in your ability to write good introductions for your essays?
A. My skills are worse now than before B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know F. I don't understand.

9. Have you improved in your ability to write good conclusions for your essays?
A. My skills are worse now than before. B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

10. Have you improved in your ability to write good paragraphs in your essays?
A. My skills are worse now than before. B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

11. Have you improved in your ability to use punctuation and spacing in your essays?
A. My skills are worse now than before. B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

12. Have you improved in your ability to clearly communicate your ideas in writing?
A. My skills are worse now than before. B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

13. Have you improved in your ability to use correct grammar in your writing?
A. My skills are worse now than before. B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

14. What has been the result of re-write assignments for you?
A. They have been bad for my English motivation/skills. B. No change
C. Small good result D. Large good result
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

15. How many re-writes assignments did you complete?
A. None B. Less than half
C. More than half D. (almost) All of them
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

16. What has been the result of the final portfolio for you?
A. They have been bad for my English motivation/skills. B. No change
C. Small good result D. Large good result
E. I don't know F. I don't understand.

17. How many of your essays were completely ready for your final portfolio?
A. None/ Less than 150 words B. One/ More than 150 words
C. Two/ More than 300 words D. All 3/ 450 words or more
E. I don't know F. I don't understand.

18. Have you improved in your ability to help others improve their writing?
A. My skills are worse now than before. B. No change
C. Small improvement D. Large improvement
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

19. Have you increased in your desire/willingness to write in English without using a dictionary until after you're finished?
A. My desire has decreased. B. No change
C. Small increase D. Large increase
E. I don't know F. I don't understand.

20. What has been the general result of composition I class for you?
A. It has been bad for my English motivation/skills. B. No change
C. Small good result D. Large good result
E. I don't know. F. I don't understand.

21. Please write any other ideas (comments or suggestion) you would like to make about your composition class. (You can give this paper to me today or bring it to my office.)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE